

B E R I T A TRAC



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Core Values that "Open" Heaven



As we continue to seek God for "**Open Heavens, Global Missions**", let us heed the words of Henry Varley to D. L. Moody, "Moody, the world has yet to see

what God will do with a man fully consecrated to Him." This continues to be our challenge especially as we serve the Lord, in whatever capacity – to be the person that God will use as we practice total submission to Him. Open heavens call for a totally opened heart to heaven.

Our consecratedness and character is reflected by the demonstrated attitude and actions springing from the core values we own and live by. An influential person of "unqualified consecratedness" is John Sung. He demonstrated plainly that godly character springs from godly values and ministry flows from godly character or consecrated being. Often the number one hindrance to the goal of godly character is the ministry itself. Many fall into the great temptation of allowing our heart and soul to be overshadowed and to shrivel - as our gifts and talents grow and as we accomplish much. We are overtaken by exploits and results at the cost of caring for our souls and relationship with God.

I think it is imperative that the whole Annual Conference should have a common integrated working ethos and culture that is biblical and binding in our TRAC community. Once we have an agreed set of Core Values that is biblical and are committed to it, then we can function with committed focus and advance with synergy in unity as God's

consecrated Annual Conference. The following well-researched and field-tested key eight Core Values (such as by the International Leadership Institute) are powerful and most needed for God's people to be effective and to be able to finish the race with distinction. (This has been shared at the 28th Session TRAC.) These are by no means exhaustive, but they are nonetheless foundational.

1. We are intentional about ministering out of a deep, personal and **intimate relationship with God** that protects integrity, increases maturity and that emphasizes the vital necessity of holiness of life. This includes guarding our prayer life and being "a person of one Book" as exemplified in John Wesley's life.
2. Possessing a **passion for the harvest** just as our Lord's expressed purpose and desire was 'to seek and save that which was lost'. May we possess a burning desire to see "the last, the least and the lost" be touched and reached with the Gospel of Christ.
3. We would look to God for men and women who have zeal and **visionary leadership**; who are empowered by the Holy Spirit to cast vision, mobilize the church and overcome challenges and obstacles to make a difference in the market-place. We look to God for the "John Knoxes" (who asked God for Scotland – or that he would die) to intensify outreach to the unchurched and nations for Christ.
4. To engage in **culturally relevant ministries** as we live and demonstrate the Kingdom life with

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Vacancy

Emmanuel Methodist Church, PJ
~ Administrative Assistant
~ Youth Ministry Coordinator

Editorial

In this issue of Berita TRAC we bring you informative and interesting articles on the various activities that have taken place within TRAC and some of the local churches. There is the article on the responses of our churches towards the flood disaster in Johor that took place some months back. The youths of our TRAC churches have written testimonies on their unforgettable experiences at 'Youth Quake' and the 'Jeremiah School'. Indeed, special emphasis and attention have to be placed on this future generation of leaders in our churches (this was brought up and discussed as one of the areas of prayer focus) We have to lead them to deepened convictions about God and His Word and into an experiential relationship with the living God. We also thank the Board of Christian Education for its regular contribution of articles and in this issue, the topic is on "Quiet Time".

"Berita TRAC" is the official newsletter of the TRAC and it is an important avenue for dissemination of information to all its local churches, thus keeping us 'connected' through the sharing of news and information. We are aware of the exciting things God is doing in our midst, in the lives of individuals and churches where activities are carried out to honour and give glory to God. We have to share them as such reports and testimonies can be so heart-warming and encouraging. As such, we want to encourage you to submit them to be published in Berita TRAC. Let's together give glory to God as we rejoice in the way God's grace and love is poured down upon you and your church. ✱

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cultural relevance, sensitivity and power so that there can be both local and global social holiness, realizing that the Gospel is for every nation, tribe, language and culture.

5. To have a **multiplication paradigm** of equippers and leadership whereby we do more than just win converts, but will disciple equippers and leaders who will in turn train other equippers and leaders, resulting in the multiplication of equippers and leaders for evangelism and ministry.
6. To work at **family priority** as God's basic societal community block. The family is essential for effective and credible Christian witness to the world and for the health of the Church. In the context of the community of faith, strong and healthy families mean strong and healthy churches for this and the next generations.
7. Every believer to be **faithful stewards** of all resources especially money, gifts and abilities as members of the body of Christ. We intentionally put in every effort to mobilize God's people for good stewardship of resources that results in touching and reaching "the last, the least and the lost" with the Gospel.
8. To be men and women of **integrity** that live holy and transparent lives that are accountable to God and the people of Christ. Integrity glorifies God and protects servant-leaders from not finishing well. Integrity also facilitates personal and "professional" growth in our life and vocation and makes us credible and authentic witnesses of Christ.

For many, these are not necessarily new things. But it is my prayer that the reality of these Core Values will become demonstrably incorporated into the personal "life manifesto" of each one in TRAC - from pastors, leaders- right down to the worshipper in the pew. May we each incarnate these Core Values and more, in the culture and life of TRAC, to the end that we shall "abide in the Lord" and purposefully

grow in consecrated character and fruitful service where we are placed by God in this generation.

On a special note, let me now share about the **Call to Prayer for our Church and Nation through the Methodist Prayer Convention 2007, 31 Aug – 2 Sept 2007**.

Let every believer in TRAC come together with the rest of the Methodist Family in our nation to seek God for revival and the blessing of our nation which is celebrating 50 years of Merdeka.

- Our target is to see at least 3500 Methodist Christians at the Convention culminating with 10,000 or more at the Melawati Stadium in Shah Alam for a Thanksgiving Celebration on Sunday 2 Sept 2007.
- Churches in Klang Valley will be encouraged to offer hospitality of opening their homes to TRAC members from outstation.
- Prayer Meetings and Groups will be formed in cities and towns: look out for these and attend.
- Play the MPC 07 VCD to your congregations – in church or in small group meetings and call for prayer and personal participation.

TRAC has been feeling this leading of God to form a movement of prayer in recent years so that we have begun our annual Prayer Conferences and School for Intercessors a few years ago. Let us personally, as a local church and as an Annual Conference make every effort to be part of the MPC 07. ✱

Erratum

In the last issue of Berita TRAC (2006. volume 27-4) on page 16 where there is the appointments list, the appointment of Mr. Tan Har Yong as supply pastor to Penang Wesley was inadvertently left out. The oversight is regretted Mr. Tan Har Yong is the supply pastor to Penang Wesley and Kulim Wesley. ✱

Election of Office Bearers to the **TRAC** Methodist Seniors Fellowship Board

The Annual General Meeting of the TRAC MSF was held on 28th March 2007, during the 16th TRAC-MSF Annual Camp 2007 held at the Berjaya Hills Resort, Pahang from 27th -30th March 2007. The following members were elected to the Management Board of the TRAC-MSF for the year 2007/2008 and they were installed by Rev. Hwa Jen, the TRAC Seniors Ministry Director, during the Closing Service of the Annual Camp 2007. ✱

| Post | Name | MSF Chapter |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| President : | Mr Daniel Chan Weng Kay | Emmanuel MC P. J. |
| Vice President : | Ms Pauline Looi | Wesley MC Penang |
| Hon. Secretary : | Dr. Khoo Soo Ghee | Trinity MC P. J. |
| Hon. Treasurer : | Mr. Tan Fu Tee | Wesley MC Seremban |
| Board members : | 1. Datin Yap Roh See | Canning Garden MC Ipoh |
| | 2. Mr. Bobby Lee | Trinity MC P. J. |
| | 3. Mr. Roland Chan | Wesley MC Penang |
| | 4. Mr. Tan Kok Huat | Trinity MC Penang |
| District Co-ordinators: | | |
| 1. Eastern Distr : | Mr. Richard Lim | Wesley MC Kuantan |
| 2. Northern Distr : | Mr. Roland Chan | (See under Board member) |
| 3. Perak Distr : | Mr. Wan Sai Pun | Canning Garden MC Ipoh |
| 4. Wilayah Distr : | Ms. Goh Joo Gaik | Wesley MC K. L. |
| 5. Selangor Distr : | Mr. Bobby Lee | (See under Board Member) |
| 6. Southern Distr : | Mr. Michael Goh | Wesley MC Seremban |
| Hon. Auditors : | 1. Mr. Chew Teik Hock | Canning Garden MC Ipoh |
| | 2. Mr. Toa Kim Meng | Wesley MC Ipoh |



• Arrrgghh...my legs...I can't feel them.



• Commandoes at work.



• Milo on the floor...!

Report On Youth Quake 2006

Youth Quake has always been an "earth shattering" event for the Methodist youths throughout the country. This year, Youth Quake was held in a National Service camp ground at Kuala Kubu Bharu. Although the journey from our homes may be long and tiring for some of us, we knew beforehand that it would be a destination worth looking forward to.

As we gathered for dinner on the first night in our new groups with unfamiliar faces, many friendships were fostered. Controlling the volume of our voices became a real challenge for all the counselors and helpers. However, crowd control was not an issue because the participants were soon divided almost equally and the tribe leaders assigned had good leadership skills. That night the worship session drew everyone to focus on our Lord.

In fact, every worship session at Youth Quake was a passionate, meaningful time spent in encountering God. The worship sessions were followed by sessions led by our speaker, Sean McDowell who traveled

for hours to be with us. Being a teacher in a small town in the United States, he was prompted to cross the oceans to share with us on how God's word manifested in his life and the people he grew up with. The topic that he emphasized on the first night was related to "The Truth" and the costs involved in following the truth as well as the --- in ignoring it. Despite a long day in our buses, we were very attentive to his message as he had added in some jokes with funny gestures and made the whole session an enjoyable one.

Every participant then proceeded to his/her designated rooms for small group discussion. The time of sharing was made easy because we were grouped according to our age. It was a great opportunity for us to get to know each other. As much as we wanted to spend more time together, the day ended rather fast and we had to move to our respective dorms as punctuality was emphasized.

Prayer sessions were held every morning before breakfast. Although the session was meant for participants who

voluntarily struggle to wake up before sunrise, the number of participants involved was outstanding. It was a quiet yet refreshing way to connect with God. In the same small discussion group, we had our morning devotion which was then followed by the worship session. The 2nd session by Sean, who is also known as the 'Spidey fan' focused on the patterns of faith and our response towards the evidences in our lives. The message that he delivered had indeed challenged us to question our faith and to reconsider our thoughts and actions in response to God's faithfulness.

After a short break, we attended the workshops which were handled by different counselors. The workshops that we attended were selected based on our choices as well as the number of participants involved. The workshops held were 'The Battleground of Emotions', 'Flirting With the Dark Side', 'Login to God's Will', 'Step 1 of World Domination' and many more topics relevant to our everyday life as youths. The fun had just begun after all the inputs from our workshops. We had



A



B



C



D

A • Who put these bottles here!

B • Leeeffttt riiiggghht...grrrr.

C • Team Work.

D • The challenge begins...

a game of lost sheep and bad wolves which were coordinated by a number of helpers instructed by Ronald Yap. In this game, the blindfolded sheep were close to being victimized as the merciless wolves were trying to change their paths by spinning them around several times. Enough with the damage done to the ears by those loud cheers from the crowd, the confused sheep had to grope for items on the floor! It was a hilarious and unforgettable moment for all of us (especially the sheep). The agenda of the day carried on and Shawn shared another message about resentment and forgiveness that night. The message was so powerful that most of us were spiritually moved to humbly move forward during the altar call for intercession.

We were wrong when we thought that was all there was in store for us. Although we were informed about the outdoor activities, we did not expect to be drenched in mud from head to toe. Whether we like them or not, we had to overcome the obstacles as a team. The challenges were named according to its theme 'Heart', 'Strength', 'Soul' and 'Mind'. These four elements were required in each tribe in order to succeed. The unity and

trust that resulted among the tribe members made the pain of sunburns worthwhile.

Of course, all good things had to come to an end. The moments we shared together as a family had definitely made it hard for us to say our goodbyes. After spending 4 days and 3 nights at Youth Quake, we left Kuala Kubu Bharu having discovered more about God, reflected more on our lives and learnt more from one another. We have been challenged to be the light of the world and make a difference with our lives.

Carol Lee
WMC, Kuala Lumpur ✽

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Youth Quake '06 was a very enjoyable experience. As first-timers, it was a breath of fresh air. There were a lot of new things to discover and learn as we had opportunities to share with one another through group discussions. As we were divided into sub-groups within the 'families', it was easier to express opinions and raise questions. However, the older ones didn't have much opportunity to get to know the younger members in the family and vice versa.

The games were fun and challenging.

Worship was great!! We really want to applaud the worship team for a job well done! We've never felt more enthusiastic about worshipping than we did during the Camp. We found ourselves looking forward to worship sessions everyday.

The sermons were inspiring. Sean McDowell is one of the best speakers we've ever heard!! He spoke from his heart and his personal experiences helped us relate well to him. He gave a different perspective to the Christian faith where he offered logical explanations and actual evidences of the truth. We felt that what he said could actually help us in sharing the Christian faith with our friends especially those who are free-thinkers. We wish we had time to thank him before he left.

Overall, it was more than what we expected; an experience we wouldn't exchange for anything!

In conclusion, IT WAS THE BEST CAMP EVER!

KwanJoonKit & KwanSuLi
Taman Ujong Methodist Church ✽



Jeremiah School 2007

~ My Testimony

I heard about JS two years ago, through the incredible testimonies of two JS alumni (I'm one now) – namely close friends like Clarissa Chua and Joyce Ng. Many others in Wesley Malacca have encouraged me to give JS a shot and to sign up for it. However, as JS '07 was a 6-week event beginning on 3rd Jan (my birthday!), my parents weren't very enthusiastic as they were very concerned about my tertiary education as well as my driving license! Thankfully, the Lord listened to my prayers and the next thing I knew, I was on a wild, crazy ride (talk about driving licenses, eh?) that would impact my life in ways unprecedented.

My Form Five year was an incredibly hectic year and I was not constant in my walk with Jesus. Quiet time was intermittently carried out and church was a social hangout. I emerged dry and weary at the end of it...unsure of my path and my next steps. In truth, I actually thought of JS as another way to fill-up my holidays and that

it would just be another youth programme I happened to be chosen for. I did not place any expectations as I had no idea what it would be like. However, something Rev. Christopher Rao (fondly dubbed as "Pastorpher") said on the very first day changed it all. It went something like this,

"My friends, welcome to Jeremiah School 2007. Expect great things to happen while you are here. Expect God to move greatly amongst us and work mighty deeds through you. Expect Him to change your lives. COME and experience HIM."

And I did so. I asked God for a time of refreshing while I was there. I found Him every morning in Colossians, Thessalonians and Zechariah – wonderful scripture passages our mentors set aside for our quiet time. I found Him in various sessions like "Nature of Christ" and "Discerning the Will of God" and I found Him in weekly Quiet Retreats where we spend a whole day in

silence with the sole purpose of seeking Him. I asked God to correct my worldviews and give me Biblical foundation in my faith and beliefs. "Sexuality and Holiness" was very enlightening as it challenged many of my conflicting views and gave me a few hurdle-leaps towards spiritual maturity.

One of the greatest things about JS '07 was the number of participants – a mere twelve. Therefore, aside from day-to-day study of Christian doctrines and many other useful aspects in the syllabus, I have learnt a great deal about living in a close-knit community and learning to trust – even love each other until we were closer than brothers and sisters in the end.

To cut the long story short, I would say that my time in JS was a journey of discovering who I am and reaffirming my identity in Christ as well as finding God's calling for my life. Together with my brethren, I have learnt to walk and work as part of the Body



of Christ (in context, the JS '07 community) and trust God all the time, especially during weekend ministries during which we shared testimonies, participated in evangelistic performances and delivered challenging messages. The theme of JS is "To raise a generation of God-fearing, faithful, persevering, selfless young leaders of a different spirit" and I believe we came to fully understand the full extent and implication of this theme towards the end of JS when we had to bring unto completion two weeks of planning for a Mass Evangelistic Event during our final mission week in Sitiawan. The theme for the Event was "Different Spirit" and the message being that Christians are called to be different for Christ and cease being nominal superficial Christians. I wrote a song for the performance – a sketch (both titled "Different Spirit") and the lyrics sincerely describe my whole journey in JS '07 as a sole transformation of a lost, clueless soul to one who

found his purpose and calling in life. That was the crux of a final impactful closure for me in Jeremiah School 2007. To sum it up, Jeremiah School changed my life. Thanks, my mentors and friends. Thanks be to God.

DifferentSpirit

Verse 1

Lord, is this the path I'm meant to take?
'Cause I'm lost and oh, so weary,
I don't know where to tread.
Lord, the ways of this world are changing
But I will follow the leading of Your voice.

Pre-Chorus

Sometimes I think of all my foolishness
And I wonder if You are there.
Touch my heart, lead me Lord
And I will hear Your voice.

Chorus

Lord, I hear You calling
And being of a different spirit,

I'll answer Your call.
Lord, I hear You calling
To raise a generation
For Your cause.

Verse 2

Lord, I will leave behind what I treasure most.
I will rise and I will carry the weight of this cross
Lord, I will make a difference in this world
With Your power at work within me.

Matthew Ong Bin Han,
Jeremiah School 2007 Student,
Wesley Methodist Church,
Malacca ✽



YouthPrayerConference

I thank God for leading me to this prayer conference in Penang. I personally think there may be something the Lord wanted me to discover at this conference. He has blessed this prayer conference and used it to build one another.

The reason I went to this prayer conference was because it was held in Penang and since I had not been to Penang, I would like to take this opportunity to visit the island. I also wanted to experience a prayer conference believing it would help me come to know Christ better.

It was at this camp that I learned a lot of things about our destiny. We were called to cross the Jordan and be on the offensive in His name for He shall lead and guide us. He used the prayer conference to prepare us for the tasks He has planned for us. Personally, I received assurance and confirmation from Him at this prayer conference because He actually reminded me that He will be with me as always and He has known me even before I was born. He has promised his absolute and unconditional love in my relationship with Him.

During one of the prayer sessions, I actually got healed by Him; He had healed me of certain fears I had which was quite hard even for me to resolve and I had to depend on Him. Yes, the Lord wanted us to depend and rely on Him. He had actually restored my spiritual and emotional strength and I know that I can always

draw from His strength to remove the fears that I had in my life. I am no longer a slave to fear. So, I thank Him for helping me to deal with my fears and to move on with my life.

Although the prayer conference lasted for only four days and three nights, it was certainly a time when prayer warriors were raised. They will watch over His plans and pray unceasingly in His name. I think all people at the camp, young and old have learnt a lot. We will make sure that we have all been refreshed and renewed in mind and spirit. We have also been challenged to share what we have learnt with others, to His glory.

Regarding prayer life, it is always important to acknowledge Him and experience the intimacy of our relationship with our Father in Heaven. For those who are new and young in prayer, do not worry, it is just like talking with Him, as long as our hearts are sincere and truthful, He will speak to us and guide us in our lives and in praying. Do not worry. Just talk to Him.

Aaron Tam
DUMC ❁

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I was one of the committee members for the National Youth Prayer Conference, and I had to run around throughout the duration of the camp just to get things done and also to make sure that everything was working

the way they should. I thought that I would not be able to really focus on what God was doing then. I did actually ask God to show me that He was working in a real way, or should I say in a more obvious way. God was really faithful, He literally opened my eyes to see that He was working at the prayer conference.

During one of the worship sessions, while I was doing back-up singing, I heard God asking me to open my eyes to look at the guy in the blue shirt. So, I did so, but I just could not see any guy in blue. I closed my eyes again to worship, and I heard it again, God was asking me to open my eyes to look at the guy in blue. I did so. But, I still could not find anyone in blue. After that, I decided not to close my eyes anymore. And when both my eyes were opened, I saw a friend of mine who was born into a Christian family, but never accepted Christ himself. He raised up both his hands and started singing aloud (he had never done that before). I was so touched, and I sensed that God was telling me that was the reason He asked me to open my eyes to look. I thought my friend was wearing green, but the moment the lights went on, I realised that he was actually wearing blue. After the session, my friends and I went to pray for him. When we were praying for him, he started to tremble and I saw tears in his eyes, and he was actually a guy who never showed his feeling to anyone, we often thought that he was numb



to everything. When the whole prayer conference was over, he shared with us that he had never experienced something so peaceful like the time we were praying for him. He had always wanted to forgive his parents, but he couldn't. But, after the prayer conference, he told us that he missed his parents, and he wanted to go back to Korea to see his parents as soon as possible. His father actually called him to ask him why was he joining the prayer conference when he had exams coming up in two weeks time. He told his father that he wanted to start putting God first in his life, and he told his father that when he put God first, God would help him take care of the rest. My friends and I are still doing the follow up job. Praise God for His work of changing lives!

Besides that, I prayed for two thirteen year-old boys after they chose to accept Christ personally (they were born into Christian families, but they had never accepted Christ as their personal Saviour). One asked me to pray for his non-Christian father, and he told me that he believed that only Jesus could help him. . At that point of time, President Ong started singing 'God will make a way', and I just told him that God was singing to him telling him that God would make a way no matter what. And he responded saying that he would press on praying for his father, knowing that Jesus would make a way. The other asked me to pray for his parents because they always

fought with each other. He too said that he believed that only God could help him in this area. I was really touched by the way they trusted in God. Could anyone else carry out work like that besides Jesus?

LawrenceChin
Wesley Methodist Church,
Penang ✽

I have attended all three Youth Prayer Conferences. When I reflect and compare the 3 prayer conferences, I see that God has His unique way of working in the prayer conference each year.

Looking at the way God moved in this year's prayer conference, my heart can't stop whispering, "God is great and amazing, He is working, He is working. He is able!"

God gathered His youths from all over Malaysia. He somehow prepared the hearts of the youths. During the altar calls, times of praying, and singing of songs and praises – God's mighty hand was just there, moving in that place. Youths responded to God, started to cry out to God for help as one family, knowing that they are not fighting against flesh and blood but against the dark forces. They submitted themselves for His work, wanting to make a stand to start praying and interceding for God's work. Youths just responded to God.

I have seen that when youths come as one body of Christ to pray according to God's will, God will just work and answer their prayers. United prayers are powerful. I am really blessed and amazed to see youths praying and crying to God as one family, hugging each other or holding hands, bowing down, asking God to show them His glory, and asking God for unity in their own youth group.

I was kind of disappointed because most of my youth members did not have the chance to attend this prayer conference. I was heart broken at first to see the condition of my youth prayer group. My youth prayer group has not been doing so well. However, God answers prayers. Just one week after the prayer conference, one of my youth members was willing to commit himself to pray with me for our youth group and for the youths in town. I know that this is a breakthrough. God is the one who touched his heart. And I know that when two or three gather in unity to pray, God will cause a breakthrough. Youths will just start to pray. This is just part of how I feel God is working in Kulim after the prayer conference. We'll just be waiting to see how God will work wonders all over Malaysia. All praise and glory be to God.

In Christ,
PhangHuiLee ✽

How to Spend Time Daily with GOD

~ The **Daily** Quiet Time



One of the goals of TRAC Board of Christian Education for this quadrennium is to encourage church members to go back to the fundamentals of the Christian life – to know God. The following article is the second of a 4-part series *Know Your God*. It focuses on the importance and the 'hows' of deepening in our relationship with God. The first article "Growing in God's Word" was published in *Berita TRAC* last year.

The last two titles under this series are:

- 1) *How to Study God's Word for Yourself*
- 2) *How to Pray*

It was in 1882 on the campus of Cambridge University that the world was first given the slogan: Remember the morning watch. Christian students like Hooper and Thornton found their days "loaded" with studies, lectures, games and discussion sessions. These dedicated men soon discovered a flaw in their spiritual armour - a small crack which if not soon closed, would bring disaster. They sought an answer and came up with a scheme they called the morning watch, a plan to spend the first minutes of a new day alone with God, praying and reading the Bible. The morning watch sealed the crack.

By whatever name we may call it - quiet time, personal devotion, morning watch - this time spent alone with God is crucial for our inner growth and empowerment as a Christian. It is as Foster says,

*"...the golden thread that ties every great man of God together - from Moses to David Livingstone, the prophet Amos to Billy Graham - rich and poor, businessmen and military personnel. Every man who ever become somebody for God has this at the core of his priorities: time alone with God!"*¹

Why it is important for a daily Quiet Time with God? Allow me to suggest five good reasons:

1. We were created to have fellowship with God

Fellowship with God means developing a relationship with Him. We know that it takes time and effort to develop any meaningful relationship. We need to spend time with God not only to develop that relationship but also to keep it healthy and alive.

2. Jesus died to make a relationship with God possible

If in a human relationship we would express gratitude by spending time with the person we need to thank and appreciate, more so it would be in our own relationship with God who has sent His own Son to die for us on the cross! It is because of Jesus' sacrifice that we are now fully reconciled with God! And what greater debt of gratitude can we show than to spend time in thanksgiving and adoration?

3. Personal time alone with God was Jesus' source of strength

(Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 22:41).

Jesus was fully God, yet He was also fully man. And as a man,

His power, wisdom and grace flowed not from His divine nature but from His utter dependence on God - "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by Himself..." (John 5:19). And so we see Him often withdrawing Himself to lonely places for prayer and communion with the Father.

He often chose this course of action before making important decisions, like the appointing of the twelve apostles (Luke 6:12-13). His agonizing prayer in the garden of Gethsemane was recorded for us in all three synoptic gospels. In the Gospel of Mark, the author wrote that "very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went to a solitary place, where He prayed" (1:35). Jesus knew that He needed those quiet times to restore His soul. As David Roper says, "It's during those quiet times that we, like Jesus, are shaped and molded and made into people that God can put to His intended use."²

4. Every person who has been effective in service for God developed this habit

Numerous examples in both the Old and New Testaments testify to this fact. Moses had his

training in leadership by having to spend considerable time in the wilderness of Midian. David was noted to spend considerable time alone in the wilderness even as a young man taking care of his father's sheep. The Apostle Paul was hidden away somewhere in Arabia; presumably seeking after God's empowerment before embarking on his epic missionary journeys and great theological debates.

Both Martin Luther and John Wesley were known to spend considerable early morning hours in the presence of God before beginning their days. Every person who wants to be effective for God has to spend time with God alone each day.

5. We cannot be a strong and growing Christian without it!

The consequences of not spending enough time with God alone are far reaching. Firstly our relationship will not develop beyond the "Hi and Bye" stage. There is no intimacy and warmth, mere superficiality at best. Secondly, without intimacy we will never come to Him and trust Him fully with our problems. Thirdly, over time we will feel spiritually disconnected and out of touch, hastening our propensity to back-slide in the process. Finally, because we have been created to have an ongoing relationship with God, our own soul will shrivel for lack of spiritual input and will atrophy in due course.

All maturing Christians need to spend this time alone with God in order to grow. Just as we need nutrients from food for our physical bodies each day, we too need the nourishment from God's Word to meet our emotional and spiritual needs.

Having understood the need for a quiet time what then are the mechanics of starting a consistent quiet time with God? Allow me to suggest the following: 3

1. Schedule the time; don't leave it to chance

You should schedule your time with God, just like any other appointment. It's even advantageous to have a "standing" appointment - meet Him at the same time every day. Although not mandatory, many people find it best to spend this time with God in the morning. If you wait until evening, you would probably spend a lot of time giving a "damage report" thus missing out the benefit of receiving fresh direction for the day.

However whatever time you set, just be consistent!

2. Meet in a secluded, quiet place

Most people have a "special place", a specific location where they meet the Lord. It may be a specific room, a comfortable chair, looking out a particular window, or on a patio. Wherever the location, it should be quiet and protected from interruptions and distractions.

3. Gather the resources you will need

It can be distracting when you are not fully prepared with the right resources at hand. What are some right resources to have at hand? A Bible - your favourite version with readable print. A notebook - to write down what the Lord speaks to you about, and to keep your prayer list. Pens, pencils, highlighters. Bible dictionary - a copy would prove handy at times. A songbook - for singing praises and adoration.

4. Begin with the right attitudes

Beginning our quiet time with the right attitudes is important. These attitudes ought to be cultivated in the course of our daily quiet time with God - reverence; expectancy; and willingness to obey.

5. Follow a plan

If you don't have a set agenda, you'll probably lapse into day-dreaming and the time will be ineffective. Adopt a set pattern and follow it every day. A simple but effective plan would be to divide the time into three equal parts - praise, Bible reading, and prayer. During the praise time express gratitude to God for who He is and what He has done. The praise time can be augmented by playing a praise CD/DVD/tape. When reading the Bible it is helpful to use a systematic reading schedule. Daily devotionals are easily available and there is a variety in the market to select from. However another approach may be to study specific books of the Bible. During prayer, while we spend time talking with God we also need to take time to listen to Him. Prayer, we must stress, is a dialogue; never a one-way process.

Soren Kierkegaard observed: "A man prayed, and at first he thought that prayer was talking. But he became more and more quiet until in the end he realized that prayer is listening." 4

Try A Simple Plan - Fifteen Minutes with God

Relax (1 minute)

"Be still and know that I am God" Quieten down! Slow down! Prepare your heart. Take a few deep breaths and wait silently on God.

Read (4 minutes)

Begin reading where you left off the day before. Read until you feel God has told you something. Then stop and reflect about it.

Reflect (4 minutes)

Think about what the passage means to you. Write down your thoughts. Part of reflecting can be memorizing verses that speak to you in a special way.

Record/Write (2 minutes)

Write out a personal application statement that is practical, passable, and measurable.

Request (4 minutes)

Conclude your Quiet Time by talking to God about what He has shown you and making your requests from your prayer list.

6. Enjoy your time with God

Our time alone with God should never become burdensome. Don't ever meet with God because we think we "have to" and don't feel guilty if we miss a day or two. We are dealing with a love relationship not a contractual obligation here.

However in the process of cultivating good habits and discipline we will occasionally lapse into a rut. The same thing happens when we try to maintain a consistent quiet time with God. So how do we overcome such problems with our quiet time?

a. The Problem of Discipline

The first problem in establishing a consistent quiet time will face us the moment we wake up each morning: "Am I going to get out of bed?" - Battle of the Blankets! This battle is often fought with our will. It is far more tempting to lie in bed with warm blankets than to get up in the dark cold morning to spend time with God. But get up we must if we ever want to overcome this problem.

Suggestions to overcome this problem:

- Go to bed early or on time
- Get up immediately when your alarm clock rings!
- Be aware of quite time robbers
- Fall asleep the night before, thinking of spiritual thoughts

b. The Problem of Distractions

Do not allow your mind to wander during your quiet time. Stay focus on what you are doing. Concentrate on the task at hand. Ask the Lord to "cover" your mind with His peace and

His presence. A simple prayer is often what we need.

Suggestions to overcome distractions:

- Get out of bed immediately
- Get thoroughly awake - some hot drinks may help
- Read and pray aloud
- Walk about during your prayer time - also good for blood circulation in the cold early morning
- Keep a notepad ready nearby

c. The Problem of Dryness

Sometimes you will feel like you are not getting anything out of your quiet time - the Battle of the Blahs! Never judge your quiet time by your feelings! Our feelings can be wrong most of the time because of several possible causes:

- Our physical condition
- Disobedience to God - unconfessed sins
- Rushing through your quiet time - a question of prioritising
- Getting into a rut
- Not sharing your insights with others - the Dead Sea syndrome

d. The Problem of Diligence

Our greatest problem will be the struggle to stay consistent. Satan fights hard to sidetrack us and keep us from our quiet time. He knows that the longer the time we spend in intimate fellowship with God the greater the empowerment we will receive from Him for spiritual battle.

Suggestions to overcome problem of diligence:

- Make a covenant or vow with God
- Schedule your quiet time as part of your daily calendar
- Be prepared for excuses, whether self-induced or from Satan
- Leave your Bible open at night to the passage for the next day

What if I miss a day?

- Don't get on a guilt trip
- Don't be legalistic
- Don't give up easily

Remember:

"So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest-time, if we do not give up." (Gal 6:9, NRSV)

It takes at least **three weeks** for you to become familiar with a new task. And it takes another **three weeks** at least before it becomes an entrenched habit.

Prayer of Commitment:

Father, I realize that I was created to have fellowship with You. Thank you for making this privilege possible through Jesus' death. I know that daily fellowship with You is to be the important thing in my life. I now want to commit myself to spending at least some time each day with You in a quiet time of Bible study and prayer. I am trusting in your strength to help me to be consistent. This I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

CheahEngSeng

Wesley Methodist Church, Klang ❀

1 *Ibid. Emphasis mine.*

2 *David Roper: Becoming Useful, July 3, 2006. Our Daily Bread; RBC Ministries, June-August Ed.*

3 *Suggestions 1,2 & 5 were taken from an article: Time Alone with God, found at web-site: <http://www.greatcommandment.net/article.php?id=65&ver=pf>.*

4 *Soren Kierkegaard. Christian Discourses. Quoted in Richard J. Foster. Celebration of Discipline (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1984), 62.*



THE **FLOODS** OF JOHOR

Jesus said, "You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act" Matthew 7: 16 (NLT) We had the occasion to honor Christ and help our fellow Malaysians when the floods hit the state of Johor twice, in December 2006 and again in January 2007. The unexpected and unprecedented heavy rains brought by the North East Monsoon caught many unaware and the losses ran into millions of ringgit. The Southern District Superintendent Rev. Yew Nieng Song and Rev. Timothy Lam immediately responded to the situation by sending out messages asking for aid and support from the TRAC churches.

We thank the Lord for fast and effective networking and communication. The call went out in all our TRAC churches for donations and the responses were encouraging. By 15th January, Rev. Timothy reported that JB Wesley had received a total of RM15, 368.80. From this amount, Wesley Methodist Church Segamat received RM3,000, Calvary Charismatic Church was given RM7,000 (RM1,000 was given to each home affected) and RM3,000 was given to JB Pastors' Fellowship (cash donations were distributed to needy families affected by the flood). RM1,820.42 was spent on the purchase of blankets, face towels, soap bars and cleaning equipment.

Damansara Utama Methodist Church in the Klang Valley was able to deploy manpower to the affected areas besides providing financial and material resources. Melaka Wesley opened the doors of its hostel to the flood victims and extended warm hospitality to them. The "rumah angkat" scheme has been set up where homes and families which are poor and needy are adopted over a period of three months.

During this period, provisions and education needs are met by contributions from churches, companies and individuals. JB Wesley has adopted 10 families and that church will also help oversee 10 others which have been adopted by DUMC.





It is heartening to note that the Christians in JB were able to come together and worked hard in unity to bring honour to the Lord's name. Together, they started relief operations almost immediately the floods hit, extending help even to the rural areas of Skudai, Kota Tinggi, Segamat and Chaah. An ad hoc committee was formed to organize and mobilize

resources and survey forms were distributed to help determine the needs and to ensure a fair and honest system of distribution of aid to the flood victims.

There are many unsung heroes at an occasion like this and the Lord sees their servant hearts as they give of themselves, time and resources to those in need. We thank the Lord for all those who helped in one way or another,

and for all those who lifted their voices in prayer for those affected by the floods.

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can." John Wesley ✽



CERTIFICATE AWARDED TO THE **METHODIST** CHURCH IN **MALAYSIA**

Wesley Methodist Church Johor Bahru was actively involved in relief work during the unprecedented heavy downpour of rain which caused flooding in many parts of the state of Johor. Wesley Johor Bahru worked hand-in-hand with other church denominations and Non-Governmental Organizations in helping the flood victims. On 27th January 2007, they also helped to channel health and education kits to the flood victims in Kota Tinggi in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Kota Tinggi (District 3340 of Rotary International).

In appreciation and recognition of the generous help rendered a certificate was awarded to the Methodist Church in Malaysia. ✽

Position:
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Emmanuel Methodist Church, PJ

General Summary of Responsibilities:

Coordinate office services such as purchasing, payroll, records control, and other administrative activities for a department/ministry, center or other organizational unit; interpret operating policies; exercise independent judgment in the resolution of administrative problems.

Essential Job Functions:

1. Assist the Office Administrator in the carrying out of duties necessary for the smooth running of the Church Office.
2. Perform general clerical duties to include but not limited to: photocopying, faxing, mailing, and filing.
3. Coordinate and implement office services such as payroll, purchasing, records control, projects and budget accounting operations.
4. Coordinate and maintain records for staff office space, and the general maintenance of the Office. Research, price, and purchase office furniture and supplies.
5. Setup and coordinate meetings and conferences.
6. Other duties as assigned by the Pastor or Church Administrator.

Scope of Responsibility: Know the goals and plans of the Church; standards, policies and procedures which may include some familiarity of all departments within the Church. Is sensitive to the interrelationship of both people and functions within the Church.

Decision Making: On a regular and continuous basis, exercise administrative judgment and assume responsibility for decisions, consequences, and results having an impact on people, costs, and/or quality of ministry in the Church.

Authority: Work under the Leadership of the Pastor and Church Administrator
Oversee and coordinate the work of other staff in the Church.

Communication: Possess good oral and written communication skills in English. Knowledge of Mandarin as well will be preferred.

Education: Required: Form Six or equivalent
Preferred: Two years college or equivalent work experience

Experience: Three years of related experience required. Additional education may be substituted for years of work experience.

Working Conditions: The position is a full time Salaried Position.

The Salary will be Commensurate with Qualification and Experience, and according to the TRAC Salary Scale for Ministers and Church Workers. ✱

Position:
YOUTH MINISTRY COORDINATOR (Full Time)

Emmanuel Methodist Church, Petaling Jaya

Qualifications:

1. Mature and Active Faith in Jesus Christ
2. Actively involved in Evangelism and Soul Winning in particular
3. Training and Experience in Youth and Family Ministries; basic Bible Knowledge; an Understanding of, and respect for, the Methodist Traditions
4. Interpersonal Skills with Young People
5. Understand and Speak English well (Knowledge of Mandarin and/or Dialects highly valued)
6. Good Organizational Skills; previous Experience highly valued
7. Enjoy Good Health and is between the ages of 25 and 45

General Responsibilities: The Youth Ministry Coordinator (YMC) will, among other things:

1. Recruit, Train, Encourage and Support Church Members in the various Volunteer Ministries among Young People.
2. Support Young People and Adults in Planning and Programming
3. Provide for Growth of Youth Groups through Visitation Programmes, Seminars, etc.

4. Work with the Youth Ministry Team to Coordinate Youth Ministry with the Ministry of the total Church. *(For further details, please contact Emmanuel Methodist Church Office).*

Accountability: The Pastor and the LCEC (through the PPRC) will supervise the work of the Youth Ministry Coordinator (YMC).

Working Conditions: The position is a full time Salaried Position. The Salary will be Commensurate with Qualification and Experience, and according to the TRAC Salary Scale for Ministers and Church Workers.

HOW TO APPLY, or FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES:

Interested Parties, please send Personal Curriculum Vitae and Recommendation Letters (if any) to:

The Administrator

Emmanuel Methodist Church
11-5 Jln PJU 1/39, Dataran Prima
47301 Petaling Jaya, Selangor

Or **Email** to: emcpj@po.jaring.my

Phone: 03~7806 5660/5661

DEADLINE for Applications: **31 August 2007** ✱

TRAC Church **Planting** Conference 2007

25 ~ 26 May 07 (Fri ~ Sat), 9.00 am ~ 6.00 pm

DR. GEORGE G. HUNTER, III



As a young seminarian in 1962, George Hunter spent 8 weeks evangelising "Muscle Beach" surfers, beatniks, and body builders. But, church jargon was alien to them. This experience led him on a lifetime quest to effectively communicate the Gospel to secular people, for which he has since led seminars across denominations worldwide and authored ten books.

Dr. Hunter has served The United Methodist Church as a pastor to executive for the Board of Discipleship's section on Evangelism. He is the co-founder of the American Society for Church Growth and founder of The Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education.

Since 1983, Hunter has served 18 years as founding Dean of the E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism at Asbury Theological Seminary. In 2001, he was named Asbury Seminary's first Distinguished Professor.

He is married to Ella Fay Price with three children: Gill, Monica, and Donald.

Overall theme: "The Changing World of Church Growth Through New Congregations."

Dr. Hunter will lead a seminar on, "Get Your Apostolic Act Together:

Church Growth Reconceived for a New Generation," which presents the book's driving ideas for growing churches and even contagious Christian movements.

*Organized by:
Board of Evangelism and
Board of Missions
Trinity Annual Conference
The Methodist Church in Malaysia.*

25 May 2007 (Friday)

1st session:

Dr. George Hunter III

"Changing Perspectives on Growing Congregations and Local Movements."

Local church planting 1 & 2

Sharing by local churches successful in church planting.

2nd session:

Dr. George Hunter III

"Changing Perspectives on New Church Planting"

26 May 2007 (Saturday)

3rd session:

Dr. George Hunter III

"Changing Perspectives on the Kind of New Churches to Plant."

Missions church planting 1 & 2

Sharing by local churches successful in missions church planting.

4th session:

Dr. George Hunter III

"Changing Perspectives on How We Help Pre-Christian People Become Christians."✳

Registration Details

Full Name

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.....

Mailing Address

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Mailing Address

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Church

.....

Tel No.

.....

H/phone

.....

Email

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PAYMENT:

| Total Amount Enclosed | RM |
|-----------------------|----|
| Bank: | |
| Cheque No: | |

Registration Fee per person

| | |
|---|---------|
| Early Bird discount On and before 30 April | RM50.00 |
| From 1 ~ 15 May | RM60.00 |

**Closing Date for registration:
15 May 07**

HOW TO REGISTER

Please **DO NOT** send cash.

Cheques must be made payable to
Emmanuel Methodist Church, PJ

Please detach the Registration portion
with enclosed Payment to :

Emmanuel Methodist Church, PJ

No. 11-5 Block D2,
Jalan PJU 1/39, Dataran Prima,
Petaling Jaya 47301,
Selangor.

Attention : Poh Kok Kian

HOW TO GET TO WESLEY METHODIST CHURCH, KUALA LUMPUR By LRT:

PUTRA line ~ Pasar Seni or
Masjid Jamek
STAR line ~ Hang Tuah

ACCOMODATION

The participants will have to book their
own accommodation. Menara Wesley
is fully booked on those dates.

THINGS TO TAKE NOTE

- Registration is Confirmed when we
receive your PAYMENT IN FULL.

- Registration Fee (non-refundable)
includes handouts, 2 lunches, 2
dinners and 4 tea breaks.
- Registration is transferable.

For more information, please contact

Rev. Henry Yong

Email: wesleyswan@pd.jaring.my
Tel: 05-6910971(o), 05-6911528 (h)

Mr Oon Lai Seng

Email: oonlaiseng@yahoo.com
012- 4251662, 04-6429001(h)



ABIDING IN THE VINE A RETREAT IN FRASER'S HILL

March 10 ~ 12, 2007

Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:4-5

Thirty women arrived one Saturday morning at the Methodist Bungalow up in Fraser's Hill, all excited and happy to be back on familiar grounds and so eager to hear God's message through our facilitator Mrs. Lily Ch'ng, who certainly was no stranger to most.

This year's theme for meditation was "Abiding In The Vine", as found in John 15:4-5. However, before going into the theme proper, Lily Ch'ng devoted one whole session to the importance of leading in worship. As she said, "This is an awesome responsibility, and one not to be taken lightly, for we are worshipping the King of kings. Every song, every prayer must be chosen with care. No more casuals like "Choice of songs, anyone?"

It was impossible to be bored when Lily was speaking, for she had a way of putting the message across so that you hear and retain it. Besides, she craftily left certain blanks in her notes for us – blanks which could only be filled up if one paid attention to her! But it was a great way to learn!

In subsequent sessions, Lily expounded the mysteries of abiding in Christ – which is a command from God. Only when we abide in Him, can we draw spiritual nourishment from Him, and so be able to bear much fruit.

The principles of abiding are that God loves us and wants to have a relationship with us – one that lasts all day, everyday. Once this is achieved, we are able to receive the many benefits of abiding in Christ – like sensing God's leading, feeling the power of God in us, and being refreshed.

"For when we spend time with Him and allow His priorities, passions and purposes to motivate us, we will ask for the things that are closest to His heart."

Later, we broke up into groups of four or five to discuss what was shared.

Sunday Worship

This message of the vine as Jesus taught was further elaborated in Lily's sermon during Sunday worship.

The offering of this service was donated to the WFM (World Federation of Methodists) and UCW (Uniting Church Women). Thanks to worship enablers Susan Welch, Polly Yoong, Lee Poh Chee and Dr. Sieh Mei Ling who also played the piano for all our praise and worship sessions.

Vespers

Vespers on the first night was led by Poh Chee, who based her meditations on Jesus' feeding of the four thousands (Mark 8). On the second night, Lily Lee, with the aid of a lighted candle, invited us to be still and listen to God speaking in our hearts.

Activities

They say that "All work and no play makes Jill a dull girl". Well, this certainly was not true at this Retreat. We had plenty of time to take long and short walks to the areas below, as well as indulge in some line-dancing after tea. God had been so good, granting us such good weather – not too hot and not too cold! In fact, it was so perfect that on the second day we decided to dance in the open – on the cemented part beside the bungalow. Imagine dancing as the mists rolled by. As Doris Chia commented, "It was like dancing in the clouds!" How exhilarating!

Yes, it had been a most memorable week-end – replete with warm fellowship, fun and good learning! Grateful thanks to the organizers, especially Polly Yoong, and our facilitator Lily Ch'ng. Most of all, we want to thank God who made all this possible!

See all of you next year?

JanetYap
KL Wesley ❀

TRAC School for Intercessors (SFI)

~ Part 3

Date : March 16 – 18, 2007

Venue : Stella Maris, Tanjung Bungah, Penang

Testimony 1

We wish to thank participants Eunice Chan, Allana Loh, Susan Chong, Doreen Wong and Irene Loh from KL Wesley for their sharing on the TRAC School for Intercessors. All of them were blessed and their spiritual eyes were opened to the leading of the Lord. The following is a compilation of their experiences and comments on how they have been blessed at the SFI.

There was the timely reminder of the need to acknowledge and address our own pain before we can be set free to intercede as individuals. Each one experienced great joy in praying for one another and in witnessing the wonders of the touch of the Holy Spirit working in the midst of them.

As for the church, there was the call for healing in our relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ. We have to pray against the barriers and strongholds of cliques in churches and that we will be bound together in unity by God's cord of love. The prerequisite is in keeping with "the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" (Eph.4:3) for it is only then that we can have the freedom and the confidence to approach God in one voice in prayer. There was the opportunity for participants representing different churches

to step forward to intercede for one another in turn. Tears flowed freely as the Holy Spirit convicted hearts and sins were confessed. The Lord ministered as His peace enveloped each heart, bringing healing and joy.

There was also the emphasis for youths to be reconciled with the older generation and conscious efforts must be carried out to close the generation gap and open up avenues for communication. We need each other to help build the church and there is the dire need to work hand in hand for the present and the future of God's Kingdom.

At SFI all participants were asked to pray for pastors, church leaders and members of all ages and groups within our churches. We may encounter conflict, relationship problems and the spirit of offence but we can turn all grievances into prayer and lay them all at the Lord's feet.

It has been a great learning experience for all who attended the SFI. We thank the Lord for His abiding presence, for sending a prayer warrior in the person of Miss. Wee to be the resource person and for the leadership of TRAC President Rev. Ong Hwai Teik whose exemplary prayer life is such an encouragement to all of us.

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Testimony 2

We thank and praise God for His message and presence at the 3rd TRAC School for Intercessors held on 16-18 Mar 2007.

On the 1st day, the message is "The New Generation, our Children." References were made to scripture, Isa.49:1-4 and Ps.127:3-7. Our young ones are considered as "Polished Arrows" in the making, they are a heritage from the Lord and are like arrows in the hands of a warrior and designed to do battle at the gates. God is raising such a generation whom He will use as arrows to contend with the enemies at the gates.

The church is called to pray for our children, love them, guide them and mentor them. We need to close the generation gap between the young and the old. We need to have people with a heart to connect with them. We have to pray for the 'Spirit of Elijah' as in Malachi 4:5-6, seeking God to turn the hearts of the father to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers.

We believe God is seriously speaking to His church, as His message was reiterated on 23 Mar.07 at the Pastors & Prayer Leaders Tea Fellowship, organized by NECF Prayer Commission in SSMC. God has

>> continue to page 19



used 2 different speakers from different parts of the world (Wee Lay Ching from Singapore and Daphne Kirk from UK) to give the same message quoting Ps.127 and Malachi 4:5-6.

The church is reminded of the principle that one generation is responsible for the next generation. We have been asked many questions like “How are we preparing the next generation to cope with what’s coming? Are we training our children and preparing them for God’s work? Are we equipping our children so that they can fulfill the Great Commission and God’s purposes? Do our young know what’s coming and will they be afraid?” The older generation will have to pour into the next generation. They need to bring back the young to church. They are to be the initiators in seeking God to turn the children’s hearts to the Father. Parents are instructed to love and obey the Lord and disciple their children as written in Deut.11.

Next, the church is told to deal with the ‘Spirit of Offence’. Scripture Heb.12:14-16 instructs us to pursue peace with everyone, and holiness without which no one can see God. We are to make sure that no root of bitterness grows in the heart that causes tension and disunity. The godless animosity ‘spirit of Esau’ must be removed.

Love and submission as taught in Eph.3-6 and 1Pet.2&3 must be shown and practiced in the church to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We walk together because of who Christ is – Eph.2:14. He is our peace who has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility. The church is warned against unhealthy cliques formed that pose as a barrier. All walls of hostility must be demolished so that no one misses His peace.

“Have you been offended in the spirit?” is the question asked. How do we handle others who in our view do the following?

- cause inconvenience
- make damaging remarks
- publicize our weaknesses
- endorse criticisms made against us
- victimization

Scripture tells us to forgive and to bear the cross, looking to Jesus who for the joy set before Him endured the cross – Heb.12:2. It is the power of the cross that will change bitterness into sweetness. The church is exhorted to make every effort to maintain the unity of the body. Do not give the enemy a foothold. Pray to God regarding the issues. Take heed of what God is saying in Phi.1:27. Whatever happens, we must conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, standing firm in one spirit, contending as one man

for the faith of the gospel. For our warfare is not against flesh and blood but against the principalities of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. So the people of God must put on the armour of God (Jesus) and pray (all kinds).

The church must recognize the importance of having a significant and strategic ministry of prayer to shield all pastors and leaders. The purpose is to thwart the enemy and to advance fruitfulness. Hence all TRAC churches are encouraged to form prayer shields for their leaders, to set up ‘light houses’ (opening up homes for prayers) in the community and to intercede for the Methodist Prayer Convention 2007 (31 Aug – 2 Sept). We need to pray in faith and with seriousness for a great spiritual breakthrough to take place in the Methodist Church.

Let us all seek God for the outpouring of His Spirit upon His nation and for the fire of revival to spread throughout the land.

ThongSweeMun

Trinity Methodist Church, PJ ❁



THE INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

During the 30th Trinity Annual Conference in 2005, the delegates sanctioned the idea of a training institute which would prepare members for service in the church. This would help alleviate the shortage of trained workers for the various areas of Christian ministry. Subsequently a working group was appointed to study the proposal and make recommendations for its implementation. A year later, at the 31st Session of TRAC, the green light was given for the formation of the Institute for Christian Ministry (ICM).

As its name implies, the ICM is a training facility which would help TRAC identify its training needs as the basis for the development, implementation and evaluation of programmes to meet those needs. Basically, the courses of studies offered by the ICM would have the three-fold purpose of inculcating spiritual formation, engaging in leadership development and providing training in ministry skills.

The broad areas of training that the ICM would be engaged in

during its formative years may be exemplified in the figure below:

The ICM would avoid duplicating programmes that are currently available but seek to coordinate, complement and converge the work of the various agencies within TRAC. It would also help the local churches through the provision of courses of studies at the intermediate and advanced levels in the "Christian Growth Strategy" of the Board of Christian Education.

An 'Interim' Board has been elected to oversee the work of the ICM for the remaining years of the present quadrennium. The members of the Board are Rev. Ong Hwai Teik (TRAC President), Dr. Chan Kook Weng, Mr. Goh Keat Seng (Moderator), Ms. Goh Kim Guat, Rev. Ricky Ho, Rev. T. Jeyakumar, Dr. Samuel Ong and Dr. Herbert Tan. The search for a full-time Director is under way, and it is expected that the Institute will be able to undertake a survey of training needs within TRAC and to commence selected courses of studies before the end of this year. ❀